public corporate sectors, trusts, societies and individuals, besides contributions from the Central and State Governments.

The NCF constitutes an important initiative for enabling institutions and public at large to contribute to culture-related endeavours, for forging meaningful inter-institution partnerships, for mobilising extra budgetary resources for culture, and for heightening awareness that culture indeed constitutes a crucial input to the overall process of development. It accepts institutions and individuals as equal partners of the Government in the management of the cultural scenario in the country and it will help overcoming the resource crunch in relation to culture-related endeavours.

(c) Contributions to the National Culture Fund will be voluntary.

**Sports Federations**

1960. SHRI VIJAY GOEL : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government or the Sports Authority of India accord any approval or affiliation to various sports federations;

(b) the authority to which these sports federations are answerable for the fairness of the sports events/ competitions organised by them and for the funds etc. collected by them from different sources;

(c) whether the Government/Sports Authority of India has come across reports about financial irregularity and mismanagement of sports events by these federations; and

(d) if so, the manner in which the Government plan to improve the working of these federations and keep a check on their financial affairs?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R. BOMMAI) : (a) Yes, Sir. The Government of India grants recognition to various Sports Federations.

(b) The National Sports Federations are autonomous bodies and follow the set of objectives prescribed under their constitution. In case of Federations which are affiliated to IOA, the IOA can take disciplinary action against the Federations for misbehaviour or any other undesirable activities. The accounts of the Federations are open to inspection by the Govt. of India. One of the conditions imposed by the Govt. of India on the Federations while granting recognition to them is that the accounts of the federations would be audited by a Chartered Accountant and the audited statement of accounts would be sent to the Govt. of India within six months of date of expiry of accounting.

(c) Yes, Sir. In two cases, the Government has received complaints of financial irregularities by the Federations.

(d) The Government has recently issued revised guidelines for imporved functioning of the National Sports Federations. Under the revised guidelines, the National Sports Federations have been asked to upgrade their administrative and financial set up by appointing qualified personnel in finance, administration and coaching. The National Sports Federations have also been asked to prepare Long Term Development Plans for over all development of the sport they are concerned with.

**Flight from Calcutta to China**

1961. DR. ASIM BALA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have considered to negotiate with the Government of China to start air services between the two countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government are also considering to operate Air India's flight from Calcutta to China; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) to (d) During the bilateral negotiations held in May 1997, an agreement has been reached with China which will enable the designated airlines of each country to operate two flights per week between India and China and beyond to a third country. Air India has no immediate plans to start direct operations between the two countries due to shortage of aircraft capacity.

**Grant to National Library/Asiatic Society**

1962. SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the total grant and other financial support given to National Library, Calcutta and Asiatic Society, Calcutta under plan and non-plan heads during the Eighth Plan period;

(b) the utilisation of same;

(c) the number of precious books and manuscripts of National Library and Asiatic Society destroyed due to poor maintenance and stolen till March 31, 1997 since their inception;

(d) whether any enquiry has been ordered in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon?